



CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS for Convening People and Influencing Decisions

This two-day course equips individuals with skills to:

- Establish and maintain relationships based on integrity and trust,
- Make and keep commitments,
- Listen and really hear one another,
- Respect diverse perspectives, and
- Design and manage effective meetings.

The course is led by Paul Axtell, Contextual Program Designs and is especially suited to groups of participants from the same workplace; you may want to enroll a team from your unit.

We have two offerings this year:

1. Monday and Tuesday, April 14-15, 8:00-3:30 daily
2. Wednesday and Thursday, April 16-17, 8:00-3:30 daily

[Register](#) for **Conversational Skills**

Each two-day session is held at the Memorial Union, Joyce Powell Leadership Room on the OSU campus. Attendees will receive a personal copy of the course manual that will serve as a valuable reference.

REFRESHER WORKSHOPS (For those who have completed Conversational Skills in a previous year)

Going Deeper on Defense Mechanisms

4/18/2014, 8:00-10:00 am

People are people. We care and we take things personally. We have things in common with everyone and we are individually unique. Being great with others starts with our intention to be wonderful with everyone, and then it's about appreciating how complex our lives are and how little insight we have into each other. This exploration of defense mechanisms has three outcomes:

- Giving our selves some room around our personal flaws.
- Giving others lots of room around their flaws.
- Examining how we might trip each other's defenses less often.

Making Meetings Matter

4/18/2014, 10:30-12:30

We all do individual work. Still, much depends on our ability to work together in groups. This session begins by exploring the perspectives that hold the most potential for turning around all of our complaints about meetings. We'll then work through the ideas that, as a leader or a participant, will provide the most leverage in improving our meetings.

In preparation...

Please keep this phrase in front of you until we meet: *Everyone is a little bit scared and a whole lot proud. Be gentle.*

From Attention to Connection to Action

4/18/2014, 2:00-4:00 pm

The current focus in coaching and changing behavior is on recent neuroscience work on insights. The research supports and explains work that has been done for years on awareness and mindfulness. This thinking seems to apply to every part of our lives, and even better, it appears obvious once explained. It does require that we be deliberate about what we want to learn, focusing on key parts, and then ensuring that our observations and insights do not disappear.

In preparation...

Please keep a simple journal and log a minimum of two insights per day. Insights may be about a discipline or field in which you are working. They can be about something you are learning. They can just be about everyday life. Said differently, notice and keep track of what you find yourself thinking about (not worrying, but thinking).

[Register](#) for Refresher
Workshops



About Paul Axtell, Contextual Program Designs

Paul and his wife Cindy live in Minneapolis. They have five children and 12 grandchildren.

After working for Monsanto for 25 years, Paul started a training company to serve corporations, universities, and other organizations. Contextual Program Designs was created in 1993 to support the development of project engineering teams in a number of organizations. Since that time, the emphasis of his work has shifted to include individual effectiveness and work with management teams.

Paul has three areas of focus. The first is working on ideas that are fundamental to dealing with everyday life. That is, how do you give people the ability to shift their thinking, broaden their point of view, and change the way they relate to current issues and to one another.

The second area of focus is in process skills. How do you set up and manage conversations in a way that works for everyone involved?

The third area is creating awareness for the best practices of working together in group situations.

Paul's expertise lies in designing and delivering programs that are tailored to fit an organization's particular circumstances and concerns. The programs include work on communications, relationships, projects, coaching and building powerful groups.

Recent projects have included coaching manufacturing teams, supporting cultural change within a university, managing a year-long training program for organizational consultants, changing working relationships within management groups, and training elementary and middle school reading coaches.

Paul is a chemical engineer with an MBA. He has ten years of manufacturing experience and twenty years in corporate consulting. The last ten years have been devoted to designing and leading programs to enhance individual and group performance within large organizations.